

Mr Dean  
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MEMORANDUM

January 23, 1960

TO: MEM - Mr. Kohler  
FROM: GEN - Martin J. Hillenbrand  
SUBJECT: Initial Meeting of Four Power Working Group on Germany  
Including Berlin Scheduled for January 24

After welcoming the various participants, you might wish to outline our thoughts as to the program of the present Working Group somewhat along the following lines:

1. No specific time limit has been set for the preparation of a report and recommendations by the Working Group. A key date is obviously the meeting of Foreign Ministers scheduled to take place in Washington on April 13-14. As has previously been pointed out to representatives of the three Embassies, we assumed that, in its initial stages, at least, the Working Group apart from American representation, would be composed primarily of representatives of the British, French and German Embassies in Washington. You had planned to chair this first meeting and then, for a period of time, withdraw from direct participation in the Working Group. At a later stage you intend again to participate directly, and the assumption is that, at this point -- which will presumably begin more intensive round of meetings -- the three Governments will wish to send experts to Washington from the various capitals.

2. It seems that realistically we must anticipate the preparatory work on Germany including Berlin to proceed rather slowly at the outset. However, if any of the countries represented have papers ready on various aspects of the subject matter to be covered, we hope they will not be held back but submitted to the Working Group for early consideration and discussion. While it may be a little difficult at this stage to see clearly how the report of the Working Group will shape up, it will obviously be necessary to have some specific papers to discuss if progress is to be made.

As we see it at this stage, we anticipate that the Working Group will have to deal with the following subjects.

a. A brief review of our estimate of Soviet intentions at the Summit on Germany and Berlin. These present will recall that considerable work was done on this in preparation for the Western Summit held in Paris in December, and nothing

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appears to have happened since which would argue against the essential correctness of the estimates contained in the paper: on this subject which was included in the Record of Washington Consultations prepared for the meeting of Heads of Governments. The Working Group will obviously have to take into account any subsequent information revelatory of Soviet intentions.

b. At some point, a tactics paper for handling the subject of Germany including Berlin at the Summit will have to be prepared. This will be an important aspect of the Working Group's task. However, in view of the preparations going on in other Working Groups with respect to other subjects to be discussed at the Summit, the work of the present Group will have to be fitted into a more comprehensive Western position on tactics for the Summit. The handling of Germany and Berlin at the Summit can obviously not be separated from the broader context, but it is realistic to assume that the recommendations of the present Group with respect to such matters as the relative emphasis to be placed on subjects at the Summit, the order in which we might prefer that they be discussed in order to achieve tactical objectives with respect to Germany and Berlin, would have an important bearing on the final Western tactical position.

c. In addition to questions of general tactics, the Working Group will also wish to consider whether certain tactical moves on the part of the West might not be advisable in an effort to seize the initiative. We have given thought to one of these possibilities and are circulating for your preliminary consideration a proposal for a plebiscite which might be made under certain tactical circumstances at the Summit. (Copies might be distributed at this point) This proposal, if it proves acceptable, might be considered as supplementary to the Western Peace Plan although it is intended specifically as a tactical response to the expected Soviet emphasis at the Summit on the desirability of a peace treaty with the two Germanies.

d. The Working Group will undoubtedly wish to take a look at the Western Peace Plan itself to see whether any changes might be suggested to improve it. We have, however, no immediate proposals to advance on this.

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3. With these introductory remarks made, we would now be interested in hearing the views of the others present regarding the future work of the Group, or relating to any proposals or papers which they might care to submit at this time or have in prospect. We will better be able to determine when the Group should hold its next meeting after we have heard your views and looked at the materials available.

**NOTE:**

Until we have obtained some clarification of the President's views as to the extent and content of the agreements reached at Paris, there would appear to be little to gain from an attempt to stent such agreements as a basis for the immediate discussions of the Working Group. In the absence of any official or agreed record, we would presumably not wish to commit ourselves to any interpretation until we have heard from the White House. However, the Germans or French may attempt at the outset to pin down terms of reference for the Working Group deriving from their version of the Paris meetings.

Tactically, it may be desirable to let the British state their position on this question first, if they are prepared to do so. We would presumably wish to take a somewhat reserved position, pointing out that, as is known, no official record of the Paris meetings was kept and each country has had to rely pretty much on such records as its representatives were able to compile. It might be noted that, judging from the newspaper stories which began to appear even before the principals had left Paris and which were apparently based on national press briefings, certain differences of view seem to have developed as to the results of the discussions between the Heads of Government.

HR:GMB:Willebrandt:all:jog

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